

#### REMARKS

The specification has been reviewed, and a clerical error of the specification has been amended.

In paragraph 2 of the Action, claims 1-12 were provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-12 of copending application No.10/671,803. When the application is allowable except for the double patenting rejection, a terminal disclaimer will be filed.

In paragraph 4 of the Action, claims 1-9, 11 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 49-23176. In paragraph 6 of the Action, claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP '176.

In view of the rejections, claims 1 and 5 have been amended, and new claim 13 has been filed. Also, claims 2, 3, 6, 7 and 11 have been amended editorially.

In claim 1, an airbag for protecting an occupant comprises a left half airbag to be deployed toward the occupant on a left side of the occupant, a right half airbag to be deployed toward the occupant on a right side of the occupant, and a width constraining device. The right half airbag is connected to the left half airbag at midsections in a direction that the left half airbag and the right half airbag deploy.

The width constraining device is attached to the left half airbag and right half airbag, respectively, for constraining lateral widths thereof expanding in a lateral width direction substantially perpendicular to the direction that the left and right half airbags deploy when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated.

Namely, the lateral width of each of the left and right half airbags is limited by the width constraining device when the left

and right half airbags are inflated. Therefore, the left and right half airbags are not excessively enlarged in the lateral direction.

In JP '176, an airbag main body 1 having bag elements 1a, 1b is connected to an opening portion 2 of a gas generator. The bag elements 1a, 1b are connected together at side portions 1c by means of stitching, glue and so on. A dent 5 is formed at a front side by connections at the side portions 1c of the bag elements 1a, 1b.

In the invention, the width constraining device is attached to the left half airbag and right half airbag, respectively. In JP '176, the side portions 1c are simply connected together. There is no device attached to the left half airbag and right half airbag, respectively.

The width constraining device of the invention constrains the lateral widths thereof expanding in a lateral width direction substantially perpendicular to the direction that the left and right half airbags deploy. The side portions 1c of JP '176 does not constrain the lateral width in the width direction.

In the Action, it was held that "Noguchi discloses an airbag for protecting an occupant comprising a left half airbag, a right half airbag, and vertical width constraining means 1c wherein the airbags are connected at midsection thereof. The width constraining means constrains the lateral widths when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated."

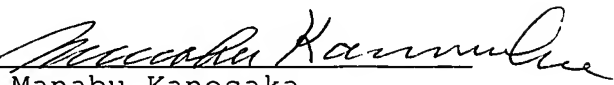
The side portions 1c for connecting the bag elements 1a, 1b do not constitute the vertical width constraining means, which constrains the lateral width, as stated in the Action.

Claims pending in the application are not disclosed or suggested by JP '176, and are patentable.

Reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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